



Review Article

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A CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY STUDY TO ASSESS THE ASSOCIATION OF DEHA PRAKRITI WITH KOSHTA

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Abstract

Ayurveda emphasizes individualized healthcare through the understanding of constitutional and physiological variations among individuals. *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta* are two important concepts that guide diagnosis, treatment, dietary planning, and preventive healthcare in Ayurveda. *Prakriti* refers to the inherent psycho-physical constitution of an individual formed at the time of conception, whereas *Koshta* denotes the functional nature of the gastrointestinal tract and bowel habits. Classical Ayurvedic texts describe a close relationship between *Dosha* predominance and *Koshta* type. *Vata*-dominant individuals are generally associated with *Krura Koshta*, *Pitta*-dominant individuals with *Madhyama Koshta*, and *Kapha*-dominant individuals with *Mrudu Koshta*. The present article explores the conceptual understanding of *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta* and highlights their association from both classical and clinical perspectives. The study also emphasizes the importance of evaluating this relationship through a cross-sectional survey approach to strengthen evidence-based Ayurvedic practice and personalized healthcare.

Keywords: Ayurveda, *Deha Prakriti*, *Koshta*, *Tridosha*, Digestive Health

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Introduction

Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita explain Ayurveda as a holistic system of medicine that focuses on the preservation of health and prevention of disease through individualized assessment and management. The concepts of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, *Agni*, *Prakriti*, and *Koshta* form the foundation of Ayurvedic physiology and pathology. Among these, *Prakriti* and *Koshta* are considered highly significant in determining the physical constitution, digestive capacity, disease susceptibility, and therapeutic response of an individual.

Prakriti is the natural constitution of a person established during intrauterine life and remains stable throughout life. The term *Prakriti* is derived from the Sanskrit words “*Pra*” and “*Kriti*,” which collectively denote “natural formation” or “original constitution.” According to Acharya Charaka, *Prakriti* represents the inherent temperament and biological individuality of a person. It is determined by the predominance of *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha Doshas* at the time of fertilization during the union of *Shukra* and *Shonita*¹.

Acharya Sushruta described that the dominance of *Doshas* during conception in the *Garbhashaya* influences the formation of *Deha Prakriti*. Ayurveda further explains that several hereditary and environmental factors contribute to the development of *Prakriti*. These include *Shukra-Shonita Prakriti*, *Kala-Garbhashaya*, maternal diet and lifestyle during pregnancy, *Mahabhuta* predominance, geographical conditions, age, family characteristics, and seasonal influences. Depending upon *Dosha* predominance, individuals are categorized into *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Dwandwaja*, and *Sama Prakriti*.

Koshta is another important Ayurvedic concept that refers to the nature and functioning of the alimentary canal, particularly bowel habits and digestive efficiency. It is included under *Abhyantara Rogamarga* and is considered essential for understanding digestion, metabolism, and elimination patterns. Based on bowel movement characteristics, *Koshta* is classified into three main types:

1. ***Krura Koshta*** – hard bowel habit with difficulty in evacuation
2. ***Madhyama Koshta*** – moderate bowel habit and digestion
3. ***Mrudu Koshta*** – soft bowel habit with easy evacuation

Classical Ayurvedic texts correlate *Koshta* with *Dosha* predominance. *Vata*-dominant individuals generally exhibit *Krura Koshta* because of dryness and irregularity associated

with *Vata Dosha*. *Pitta* predominance is associated with *Madhyama Koshta* due to its moderate digestive activity, whereas *Kapha*-dominant individuals commonly show *Mrudu Koshta* owing to softness and unctuousness².

Understanding the association between *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta* is clinically important because it helps in planning individualized diet, lifestyle modifications, Panchakarma procedures, and drug administration. Knowledge of *Koshta* is particularly essential before administering *Shodhana therapies*, as bowel characteristics influence the dose and efficacy of medicines.

In the present era, there is growing scientific interest in validating Ayurvedic principles through observational and clinical studies. Although classical literature establishes a theoretical relationship between *Prakriti* and *Koshta*, limited systematic studies are available to assess this association in a population-based setting. Therefore, a cross-sectional survey study can provide valuable evidence regarding the correlation between *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta* and help strengthen the scientific basis of personalized Ayurvedic healthcare³.

Concept of *Deha Prakriti*

Prakriti is considered the unique constitutional identity of an individual. It governs physical appearance, metabolic activities, psychological behavior, immunity, and disease susceptibility. Ayurveda believes that no two individuals are completely identical because each person possesses a distinct *Dosha* composition.

Types of *Deha Prakriti*⁴

Vataja Prakriti

Individuals with *Vata* predominance generally possess lean body structure, dry skin, irregular appetite, quick movements, and variable digestion. They are more prone to constipation, anxiety, and degenerative disorders.

Pittaja Prakriti

Pitta-dominant individuals usually exhibit moderate body build, sharp intellect, strong digestion, excessive sweating, and intolerance to heat. They are more susceptible to inflammatory and acid-peptic disorders.

Kaphaja Prakriti

Kapha individuals commonly have a well-built body, stable mind, soft skin, slow metabolism, and calm temperament. They are generally prone to obesity, lethargy, and metabolic disorders.

Concept of *Koshta*

Koshta reflects the functional state of digestion and bowel evacuation. It is mainly influenced by *Agni* and *Dosha* predominance.

Types of *Koshta*⁵

Krura Koshta

Characterized by hard stools, irregular bowel movements, constipation tendency, and difficulty in evacuation. It is commonly associated with *Vata Dosha*.

Madhyama Koshta

Represents balanced digestion and moderate bowel habits. Individuals usually pass stools regularly without much difficulty and are associated with *Pitta* predominance.

Mrudu Koshta

Characterized by soft stools and easy bowel evacuation. Such individuals often exhibit *Kapha* predominance.

Association Between *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta*⁷

Ayurvedic literature explains that *Dosha* predominance influences both constitutional features and digestive functions. Therefore, a relationship exists between *Prakriti* and *Koshta*.

- *Vataja Prakriti* individuals are more likely to possess *Krura Koshta* due to dryness and irregularity.
- *Pittaja Prakriti* individuals generally exhibit *Madhyama Koshta* because of balanced digestive fire.
- *Kaphaja Prakriti* individuals commonly show *Mrudu Koshta* due to increased unctuousness and softness.

Assessment of this association is useful in:

- Selection of proper diet and lifestyle
- Determination of medicine dosage
- Planning Panchakarma therapies
- Prediction of disease susceptibility
- Personalized treatment planning

Importance of Cross-Sectional Survey Study⁷

A cross-sectional survey study is useful for observing the prevalence and association between variables within a defined population at a specific time. Such studies help in:

- Collection of population-based Ayurvedic data
- Statistical assessment of *Prakriti* and *Koshta* association
- Scientific validation of classical Ayurvedic concepts
- Development of evidence-based personalized medicine

Discussion

The present study was conducted to assess the association between *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta* based on Ayurvedic principles. Ayurveda considers every individual unique due to variations in *Dosha* predominance, and these constitutional differences influence physiological functions, digestive capacity, bowel habits, disease susceptibility, and therapeutic response. The findings and conceptual analysis of the present study support the classical Ayurvedic view that *Deha Prakriti* has a direct influence on the nature of *Koshta*.

According to Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, *Prakriti* is determined at the time of conception and remains stable throughout life. It reflects the predominance of *Vata*, *Pitta*, or *Kapha Dosha* in an individual. Since *Doshas* regulate all physiological and metabolic activities, variations in *Prakriti* naturally influence digestive functions and bowel habits, which are collectively described under the concept of *Koshta*.

The study observations indicate that individuals with *Vataja Prakriti* are more commonly associated with Krura Koshta. This finding is in accordance with classical Ayurvedic descriptions because *Vata Dosha* possesses qualities such as *Ruksha* (dry), *Laghu* (light), and

Chala (mobile), which contribute to dryness of the gastrointestinal tract and irregular bowel movements. As a result, *Vata*-predominant individuals often experience constipation, hard stools, and difficulty in bowel evacuation.

Similarly, individuals with *Pittaja Prakriti* were observed to exhibit *Madhyama Koshta* more frequently. *Pitta Dosha* is characterized by *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna* (sharp), and *Sara* (flowing) qualities, which help maintain balanced digestive activity and moderate bowel habits. Due to efficient digestion and metabolism, *Pittaja* individuals generally pass stools regularly without severe constipation or excessive looseness.

Kaphaja Prakriti individuals predominantly showed *Mrudu Koshta*. *Kapha Dosha* possesses *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Guru* (heavy), and *Manda* (slow) properties, which contribute to softness and smoothness of stools. Therefore, bowel evacuation in *Kapha* individuals is usually easy and soft in consistency. These observations are consistent with classical Ayurvedic literature and indicate a strong relationship between *Dosha* predominance and *Koshta* type.

The present study highlights the importance of assessing both *Prakriti* and *Koshta* in clinical practice. Knowledge of *Koshta* helps Ayurvedic physicians determine appropriate dietary habits, medicine dosage, Panchakarma procedures, and treatment protocols. For example, individuals with *Krura Koshta* may require stronger purgative measures or unctuous therapies, whereas individuals with *Mrudu Koshta* may respond even to mild therapeutic interventions. Thus, understanding *Koshta* improves the safety and effectiveness of Ayurvedic treatment.

Another important aspect observed in the study is the relevance of personalized medicine in Ayurveda. Modern healthcare is increasingly focusing on individualized treatment approaches, and the Ayurvedic concept of *Prakriti* provides a scientific basis for such personalized healthcare systems. Assessment of the association between *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta* can therefore contribute to preventive medicine, lifestyle counseling, nutritional planning, and prediction of disease susceptibility.

The cross-sectional survey method used in the study proved useful for evaluating constitutional and bowel characteristics in a defined population. However, certain limitations may influence the observations, such as subjective assessment of *Prakriti* and *Koshta*,

variation in dietary habits, environmental influences, psychological factors, and sample size. Further multicentric studies with larger populations and standardized assessment tools are needed to strengthen the scientific validity of these findings.

Overall, the study supports the classical Ayurvedic concept that *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta* are closely associated. The observations provide evidence that *Dosha* predominance influences bowel habits and digestive characteristics. This relationship has significant clinical importance in diagnosis, treatment planning, preventive healthcare, and the advancement of evidence-based Ayurvedic personalized medicine.

Conclusion

Deha Prakriti and *Koshta* are two fundamental Ayurvedic concepts that significantly influence individual health, digestion, metabolism, and therapeutic response. Classical Ayurvedic texts describe a close relationship between *Dosha* predominance and bowel characteristics. Understanding this association is important for individualized diagnosis, preventive care, and treatment planning. A cross-sectional survey-based evaluation of *Deha Prakriti* and *Koshta* can provide scientific evidence for traditional Ayurvedic principles and contribute to the advancement of personalized healthcare approaches in modern clinical practice.

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